

Volume 9: Issue 13  
May 9 - 22, 2012

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# street sense

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## Produce for the People

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Assessing The district's  
progress to end  
homelessness in  
5 years.

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**Buy a Mother's Day Card Yet?**

*Give her a Street Sense!*

SEE BACK COVER

COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
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*Street Sense* aims to serve as a vehicle for elevating voices and public debate on issues relating to poverty while also creating economic opportunities for people who are experiencing homelessness in our community.



North American Street  
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of Street Papers

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-Getting the bad news from Facebook.

## COVER ART

Bread for the City staff and supporters turned out to enjoy planting days at the City Orchard.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF BREAD FOR THE CITY

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A new issue comes out every two weeks, but you can stay connected to *Street Sense* every day!



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## OUR STORY

*Street Sense* began in August 2003 after Laura Thompson Osuri and Ted Hen-son approached the National Coalition for the Homeless on separate occasions with the idea to start a street paper in Washington, D.C.

Through the work of dedicated volunteers, *Street Sense* published its first issue in November 2003. In 2005, *Street Sense* achieved 501 (c) 3 status as a nonprofit organization, formed a board of directors and hired a full-time executive director.

Today, *Street Sense* is published every two weeks through the efforts of four salaried employees, more than 100 active vendors, and dozens of volunteers. Nearly 30,000 copies are in circulation each month.

# Your Dollar Makes a Difference

(*Street Sense* economics)

Each vendor functions as a self-employed subcontractor for *Street Sense*. That means he or she re-invests in the organization with every purchase. Vendors purchase the paper for 35 cents/issue, which will then be sold to you for a suggested donation of \$1.



**35%**  
Supports  
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costs

Therefore, 35 cents of your donation repays the vendor for her initial purchase. The remaining money is profit that will support your vendor as he works to overcome homelessness.

**65%**  
Directly  
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vendor



## As self-employed contractors, our vendors follow a code of conduct:

1. *Street Sense* will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1. I agree not to ask for more than a dollar or solicit donations for *Street Sense* by any other means.
2. I will only purchase the paper from *Street Sense* staff and will not sell papers to other vendors (outside of the office volunteers).
3. I agree to treat all others – customers, staff, other vendors – respectfully, and I will not “hard sell.” (threaten or pressure customers)
4. I agree to stay off private property when selling *Street Sense*.
5. I understand that I am not a legal employee of *Street Sense* but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
6. I agree not to sell any additional goods or products when selling the paper.
7. I will not sell *Street Sense* under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
8. I agree to stay a block away from another vendor and respect the space of all vendors.
9. I understand that my badge is the property of *Street Sense* and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers and display my badge and wear my vest when selling papers.
10. I understand that *Street Sense* strives to produce a paper that covers homelessness and poverty issues while providing a source of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.



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## Committee Challenges Mayor's Homeless Budget

After holding 82 hours of hearings and weighing the testimony of 450 witnesses, a D.C. City Council committee voted May 2 to reject Mayor Vincent Gray's proposed human services budget for Fiscal Year 2013.

"The Fiscal Year 2013 proposal reflected fiscal decisions we should not endorse. It risks the safety and well-being of homeless residents," said Committee on Human Services Chair Jim Graham.

A \$7 million shortfall in federal funds could result in the closure of shelters for single men and women during the warmer months of the year, Graham said. He also worried the mayor's spending plan did not adequately address the needs of the city's increasing numbers of homeless families.

"There will be no cuts in the family shelter, but no increase in capacity either," Graham added. "We will have more children and babies living in stairwells and bus stations," Graham predicted. "That is no way to hold a family together."

Between November and April, 866 families applied to the city for shelter, a 15 percent increase over the previous

winter season. The increase overwhelmed capacity at the city's family shelter, at the former DC General Hospital.

The mayor has said the restoration of the \$7 million in federal funding for homeless programs is at the top of his budgetary wish list. Local dollars are being used to replace lost federal funds in several other areas of the proposed budget.

Graham was joined by fellow committee members Michael A. Brown, Tommy Wells and Marion Barry in voting against the proposed budget for the city Department of Human Services. Committee member Yvette Alexander voted to approve it.

Gray's office did not return calls for comment on the committee's rejection of the human services budget. Final approval of the fiscal year 2013 budget is scheduled for May 15.

-Mary Otto, Editor-in-Chief

## Long Awaited Groundbreaking for New Shelter

The long-anticipated groundbreaking ceremony for Central Union Mission, a program that has been around for 126 years, finally took place on Monday, May 7.

The men's shelter, which will be housed at the historic Gales School at 65 Massachusetts Ave. NW, is set to open in the spring of 2013. It will be relocating from its home on R and 14th Street NW when the \$12 million renovation of the Gales School is complete.

The tone of the ceremony was one of extreme gratitude and relief. Expressions of appreciation were offered, along with a musical performance. Easels displayed floorplans of the new facility. Aaron Davis shared his experiences as a former resident of Central Union Mission who went back to school and is working toward his doctoral degree.

David Treadwell, executive director of Central Union Mission, said he was excited to be moving the shelter back downtown after 30 years.

"This is an exciting time for us, but it's not about a building," Treadwell said. "We are bringing ministry and services back to the heart of Washington where we belong."

Central Union Mission is the district's oldest social services agency, and received help from 2,100 volunteers this year. It is not using government funds to build or operate the new building, and the rebuilding will be overseen by Forrester Construction.

The Gales School had been "sitting there for decades," Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton told the crowd. "A city is reborn when you recreate its uses."



Councilman Jim Graham added that the school, which was built in 1881, represents "the dedication to doing the right thing by the people of the District of Columbia." He commended the effort of resurrecting a low-barrier shelter.

Central Union Mission will pay rent of \$1 per year for use of the building.

"We are going to be ready to meet the needs of the people of Washington," Treadwell promised.

-Christina Mele, Editorial Intern

# YES!

# street sense

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- ☐ \$60 Provides food for six Writer's Group meetings.
- ☐ \$100 Provides office supplies for one month.
- ☐ \$300 Buys vendor badges for six months.
- ☐ \$500 Makes significant improvements to the paper.
- ☐ \$1,000 Secures space needed for vendor training.
- ☐ \$1,500 Prints four issues of the paper.
- ☐ \$5,000 Helps build significant organizational capacity.
- ☐ \$ Towards whatever is needed the most.
- ☐ \$ Directly to vendor \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ \$40 For a bimonthly subscription (26 issues).

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"Street Sense"  
and mail to  
1317 G Street NW  
Washington, DC 20005

Donate online @ [www.streetsense.org](http://www.streetsense.org)

Help *Street Sense* vendors like Veda get back to work and improve their lives.

### My info:

Name	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>
Phone	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>



Veda was homeless and dealing with a history of drug abuse. Then, more than four years ago, a friend referred her to *Street Sense*. Since becoming a vendor, Veda has found a new home and a new lease on life. She says her customers have been very supportive. "They talk to me and give me a lot of encouraging words." Veda can often be found singing and selling her papers on the corner of G and 13th streets,



# Are we Ending Homelessness?

*Halfway through a five year plan, advocates and officials pause to take stock*



End Homelessness in DC panelists Nan Roman and David Berns greet attendees and answer questions after a recent symposium in Northwest Washington.

PHOTO BY BRETT MOHAR

By Roxanne Goldberg  
Volunteer

Homelessness was something Candi Darley had observed while working as a nurse in Washington, D.C.. She saw signs of extreme poverty in some of her patients: disheveled and disoriented, hair infested with lice.

Yet Darley never imagined that a series of unforgiving circumstances would lead to her decade-long struggle with homelessness, sleeping in shelters, hospitals and on the streets.

"One day I had to go to the hospital when I was at the shelter, and I didn't get out until the morning," Darley said. She wandered the streets, feeling lost and drugged, wearing her hospital gown. "I looked like the people that I had seen and said 'That would never happen to me.' But that happened to me."

Darley's desperate journey took a hopeful turn in 2010, when, with the help of the Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place (CCHFP), she found a place to call home. It was that same year that the city of Washington launched an ambitious five-year plan to end the cycle of homelessness for thousands of other city residents.

Two and a half years since the implementation of the five-year plan, city officials and homeless advocates celebrate success stories but still face many obstacles. To assess the progress, CCHFP hosted the symposium "Ending Homelessness in DC: Just How Close are We?" on April 24.

Officials agreed that the goal has been elusive. Permanent supportive housing programs have helped reduce the number of chronically homeless

men and women living in the city, and programs targeting veterans have had a significant impact. However, the number of homeless families has exploded. In 2010, D.C.'s annual homeless count included a total of 6,539 men, women and children. In 2012, that total rose to 6,954.

"We've made some progress with the single-adult population, down from 3,900 people in 2009 to an official count of 3,767 for this year. So it's down a little bit but not as much as we would want," David Berns, director of D.C.'s Department of Human Services (DHS), told a diverse crowd of more than 150 D.C.-based leaders of government agencies and nonprofit organizations, members of neighborhood associations and faith-based organizations, and generally concerned residents. "Where we are really struggling is the changing face of homelessness in the District, and that's families."

The ongoing effects of the nation's housing crisis and economic downturn, combined with the rising cost of housing, have had an impact on family homelessness, in the District and across the country. From 2009 to 2011, the number of homeless families in D.C. grew by 900 individuals, and the number of families placed in shelters and hotels more than doubled.

"We can't continue this. We can't continue mainly because of the kids," Berns said. "One night living in that situation is too many."

The five-year Strategic Action Plan to End Homelessness, developed by the District of Columbia and the Interagency Council on Homelessness, calls for a reduction of the overall number of homeless individuals and families through a

combination of housing options and social services, including medical and psychological care, counseling and job training, to help address some of the problems that contribute to homelessness.

"We thought this was audacious but doable, based on new research showing solutions to homelessness that were more effective, and in many cases, costing less. It all had to do with getting people back in housing faster and linking them with services," said Nan Roman, president and CEO of the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

In the system, families with no place else to go are placed in the city's family emergency shelter at the former D.C. General Hospital. But officials, including Berns, acknowledge the arrangement is only a Band-Aid solution, and an expensive one at that. Maintaining a family at the hospital costs \$150 a night, \$80 more than permanent housing would cost, according to Berns. Numerous studies have shown a stable living situation is the first step to resolving other problems underlying homelessness.

"I am a true believer in the housing-first philosophy, and that means that unless you get someone in a stable place to be, they're not going to be successful in their mental-health plans, successful in their substance abuse issues, and they're certainly not going to be successful in obtaining and retaining a job," Berns said.

Though the fight to end homelessness among families has been a struggle, hope lies in the immense success seen locally and nationally among the veteran and single-adult populations.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) implemented a five-year

strategic plan in 2010 with a focus on consolidating resources and collaborating with government agencies such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and community partners such as Friendship Place in order to help veterans regain stability as quickly as possible.

The program has been successful and is cited as a possible model for other homeless populations. In just one year, the number of homeless veterans in D.C. declined 11 percent, and the national success rate for people remaining in permanent housing after two years has remained at 85 to 90 percent.

"We can get everyone housed. There's got to be a way that the U.S. can provide a house for everyone," Jesse Vazzano, VA homeless coordinator, said to resounding applause. "Housing is not a reward. It's a right."

The other panelists agreed that permanent supportive housing is the solution, and though the government will ultimately be the source of housing for at-risk populations, it is impossible to end homelessness without continual advocacy and leadership.

Roman said she has not given up on seeing an end to homelessness, if not in the next two and a half years, at least within the foreseeable future.

"It's all about political will," she said. "There's no question we could [end homelessness] in the next 10 years. We could do it in less than that if we wanted. It's all driven by the fact that we don't have enough housing."





Bread for the City staff and supporters turned out to enjoy planting days at the City Orchard.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BREAD FOR THE CITY

# Produce for the People

*Orchard project expects to yield 40,000 lbs of fresh food annually, to be distributed affordably through Bread for the City's food pantry*

**By Meagan Ramsay**  
Editorial Intern

Move over cherry trees, there's a new orchard in town.

On 2.75 acres in Beltsville, Md., just 30 minutes from D.C., the City Orchard is taking root with 1,000 trees and bushes planted to support the Bread for the City's food pantry.

Serving 5,000 households a month, the organization operates the largest food pantry in the District.

"We haven't found a model in the United States like this project that directly provides food to food pantries," said Ryan Hill, associate director of development at Bread for the City. "At least nothing on this scale of an orchard that will produce thousands upon thousands of pounds of food."

When the trees and bushes mature, City Orchard is expected to yield 40,000 pounds of fruit annually, Hill said.

Bread for the City staff and volunteers gathered March 25, and again April 14 and 15, to plant the apple, Asian pear and persimmon trees, as well as the blueberry and blackberry bushes. Harvesting a variety of fruits and vegetables means the food pantry will be stocked for the entire span of the growing season, which runs from June through October. The specific plants were chosen because of their ability to thrive in D.C.'s climate.

Planning an orchard from the ground up is not an easy task. Bread for the City teamed up with Casey Trees, a charitable organization that works to protect Washington's tree canopy. Casey Trees assisted with training planting volunteers, as well as equipping Jeffrey

Wankel, food projects specialist and project manager for City Orchard, with the tools and experience needed to run an orchard.

Growing its own produce allows Bread for the City to offer expensive items at lower costs to families in the District, helping to keep groceries affordable despite fluctuations in food prices.

"Blueberries can be \$4 a pint. It's thrilling for us to be able to provide that luxury to our clients," said Sharon Feuer Gruber, nutrition consultant and co-conceiver of the orchard project.

Healthy food selections may often cost more than household budgets allow, said Hill, recalling an eight-year-old who had never seen a strawberry before.

"We are able to provide access to fruit they've never had," Hill said. "If you can't afford it at the grocery store, where are you getting it?"

Learning to enjoy healthy food is just the beginning of a healthy lifestyle. Living in an urban environment can also deprive residents of the experience of fresh air and open skies. The orchard gives clients of Bread for the City a taste of a different world, something beyond "the day-to-day concreteness," where they can find peace with nature, Hill said.

The trees and bushes will be matured and ready to harvest by 2014. The first 12 to 18 months do not require much upkeep outside of getting the trees to grow.

"Almost all of the work is front-loaded. The hard part is getting the plants in the ground and getting them to start growing," Wankel said. Our goal is to have the most organic orchard possible."

Now that City Orchard is planted,

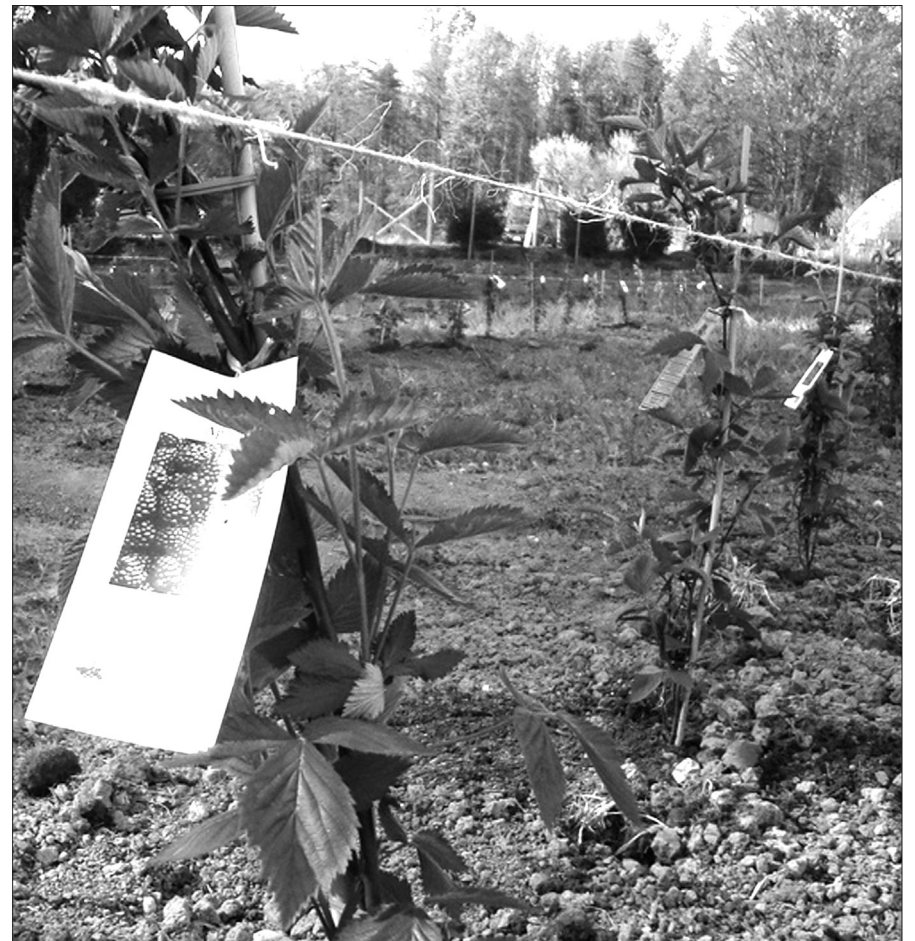
Bread for the City is requesting that people "adopt" a tree for \$35. That amount provides for one year of upkeep, which will help maintain the orchard beyond the start-up cost.

City Orchard operates in conjunction with Bread for the City's 3,500 square-foot rooftop garden. Organizers see both projects as integral to the organi-

zation's main goal.

"Bread for the City helps people by showing them dignity and respect," Gruber said.

*For more information about adopting a tree at City Orchard, visit [donate.breadforthe-city.org/orchardblog2](http://donate.breadforthe-city.org/orchardblog2).*



The City Orchard will grow a variety of produce - including apples Asian pears, persimmons, blueberries and blackberries - to keep the food pantry stocked through the growing season.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BREAD FOR THE CITY



# New Educare School to Open in June

## Parkside/Kenilworth school will offer free childcare and educational development

By Mark Rose  
Editorial Volunteer

Tenita Paige was scared for a long time. She was struggling with unemployment and raising her two-year-old daughter, Treasure, by herself.

Then, walking around her Ward 7 neighborhood, she saw a sign posted for a new Educare School opening in Parkside/Kenilworth next month. The school promised all-day, every-day child care and educational development for free. Paige thought it would be good for Treasure, applied for admission right away and found she was qualified.

So instead of remaining anxious about the future, Paige was able to change her outlook on life dramatically. She says now there is time not only to look for a job without having to worry about her daughter's well-being but also to pursue her professional interests teaching pre-schoolers or in the culinary arts. She would like to get a teaching certificate.

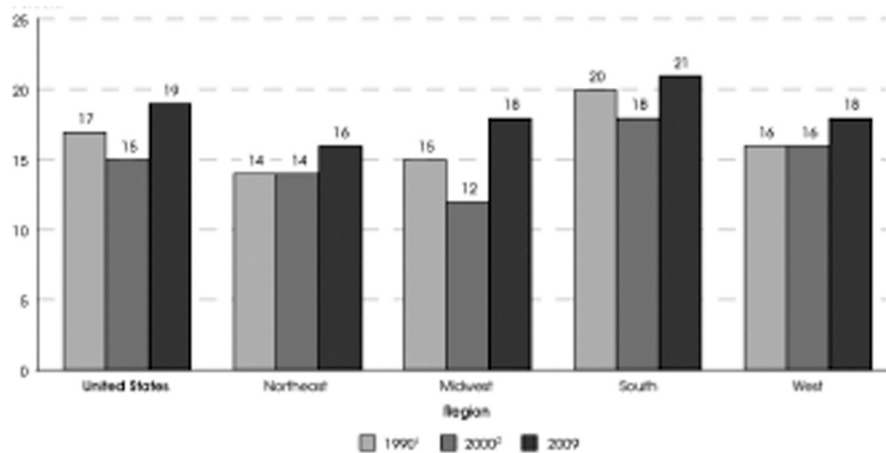
Paige feels confident she now can be a role model for her daughter, rather than the reverse. "I feel better going out, looking for a job, going out on interviews, finding a job. It's a lot easier," she said. "It makes me feel good I won't have to worry about her."

The new Educare school, set to open at the end of June, is creating quite a stir in the neighborhood among educators, officials of nonprofits and parents.

"This is something that has been buzzing long before I came to this organization," said Ayris Scales, the newly appointed executive director of D.C. Promise Neighborhood Initiative (PNI), one of the nonprofit organizations that partnered with Educare to fund the project.

"They should be [excited], because of the high standards and quality of the education these young people will receive. We're ecstatic to have Educare within that footprint," Scales said. DC PNI focuses most of its efforts in Ward 7, where Parkside/Kentworth is located. There, 80 percent of families consist of single mothers raising their own kids.

### Percentage of 5 to 17 year-olds in families living in poverty, by region: 1990, 2000, and 2009



With this new school, those mothers can go out, look for jobs and be self-sufficient, rather than staying at home and relying on public assistance.

"We're saying now that all children matter, all have a right to quality education," Scales said.

While there are other day care alternatives in the area, as well as elsewhere in D.C., this is the first that will offer year-round, every-day care to children six weeks to four years old, just before entrance to kindergarten. The school sees its mission as making these young children ready for kindergarten when they get there at age five.

Parent Lecha Green, who is sending her 19-month old twins Tensley and Temple to the new school, said she likes Educare's track record, having been dissatisfied with other programs in the area. The organization has several other schools in the U.S., all of which have been successful so far, particularly in Chicago, Green noted.

"I think this center is bringing hope to the community," Green said. New stores and residential apartments are going up, too. For the first time in a long time, Green can see the D.C. government investing in the future of Ward 7.

The school, funded by both Headstart and pre-Headstart, will have room for 175 children at a time, including infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers.

"There are clearly more than that who need access to early childhood care and education," D.C. Educare Executive Director Carol Howard said in a recent interview. "Our expectation is to be part of a community of practitioners to serve those at risk of poverty; they're the ones who benefit most from high-quality care. We are trying [together] to change the trajectory of children who are at risk."

**"We're saying now that all children matter, all have a right to quality education,"**  
**- Ayris Scales**

To qualify for admission, a family must have an income at or below the federal poverty line established by Headstart, and priority is given to families who need all-day, year-round care for their young children. Beyond that, vacancies are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Howard noted that they have plenty of vacancies re-

maining for 3- and 4-year olds. Admission for all accepted families is free. Pre-application, to see if one qualifies for admission, is done on the Educare School website. In addition to the 175 admitees, HeadStart requires the school to maintain a waiting list.

The Educare School program aims to go into communities established as ones with the greatest need and is intended to be a comprehensive child care and early education-focused school.

Howard commented further that the school staff wants families to keep their children in the school until they reach kindergarten age so they can build relationships with them. In each classroom there will be three professional staff members: a head teacher with at least a bachelor's degree, an assistant who has at least an associate's degree and an aide who has a child development credential.

"We have a long time to develop a relationship with a family [coming in] and stay with them until they are ready to move on," Howard said. "Hopefully they emerge from that experience stronger."

The program will be able to measure results, Howard said, when the first class of 4-year-olds is ready to leave them and enter kindergarten. The empirical research that has been done says education is particularly important at this early developmental stage. It, and others around the country already in operation, are the best test of impact, Howard said.

Each Educare school has a comprehensive plan to measure child and parent outcomes, which helps with continuous improvements. The local results will also contribute to a national study of the schools' effectiveness, Howard added.

Sharita Slayton, DC PNI Director of Resident Engagement, said she felt like a better mother now that she could provide for her child.

"The mayor has said he wishes he could start education in the womb. Educare is the right start, getting them started at age six weeks," Slayton said.



# TRANSPORTATION

## *an invisible barrier*

By Brandon Cooper  
Editorial Intern

Transportation in the Washington, D.C., metro region is frustrating — and expensive — for anyone.

The average household in the region spends \$13,000 annually on transportation, according to a 2009 report by the Urban Land Institute. In some areas, the cost is even more. Someone living in College Park, Md., will spend almost \$15,000 on average commuting in and out of Washington, according to the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT). If commuting from northern Montgomery County, add about another \$2,500 to that figure.

But what about the costs for those who do not have a home?

For organizations helping the homeless or those living below the poverty line, there are so many other needs to meet — housing, food, clothing, education, employment — that transportation often becomes a secondary concern.

“Transportation is one of those issues that is unaddressed specifically by any certain organization in the city,” said Amanda Formica, a case manager at Miriam’s Kitchen and the facilitator for the Coalition of Housing and Homeless Organizations’ (COHHO) workgroup on transportation.

While no one group or program has championed the cause of affordable and accessible transportation, many organizations in the city do what they can to help the homeless and impoverished get around. But these efforts are only meant to provide temporary assistance — not long-term solutions. Formica pointed out that many programs give out bus tokens, but only in small amounts.

FareShare, an organization of volun-

teers created in 2005 by David Mortlock, takes donated paper Metro farecards and converts them into \$100 SmartTrip cards to give to veterans in transitional housing in the area. Jesse Sanders, who leads FareShare today, said Mortlock created the organization because it was an easy way to help homeless veterans.

“[Mortlock] didn’t see transportation as the most pressing issue, but what he figured out he could give [homeless veterans] was transportation assistance,” Sanders said.

Capital Bikeshare recently partnered with Back on My Feet, the running program for the homeless, to give discounted memberships to certain individuals who have remained consistent in their exercising and training. Larry Taylor, one of the men who received a discounted membership, is looking forward to the financial and physical benefits to riding a bike to get around.

“Oh man, [riding a bike] is going to save me money and make my endurance even better,” Taylor said.

Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church’s Transition Assistance Program (TAP) will pay for public transportation for the first two weeks of an individual’s new job or training program if he or she is enrolled in TAP.

Still, with all this effort, the transportation assistance provided by these organizations is a short-term solution and often not the main concern. Back on My Feet may help the homeless move around, but the running groups are not meant to provide transportation. Priscilla Skillman, the chair of the TAP Board, also emphasized that the church’s program was not about transportation, calling the cause “a secondary thing we do.”

Transportation is even forgotten in how we define affordability. Tradition-

ally, affordable housing is defined as costing less than 30 percent of a person’s income, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). However, a house that costs 30 percent of a person’s income may put him or her farther away from a job, making the total cost of transportation and housing higher than if the person had paid more for housing closer to work.

In 2006, CNT redefined affordable housing as a home where housing and transportation costs did not exceed 45 percent of a household’s income. Based on this definition, 61 percent of neighborhoods are considered affordable in the D.C. metro region, compared to 72 percent when using the traditional affordability definition.

With transportation needs either placed to the side or altogether forgotten, some are calling for an increased focus on the issue.

“There are a lot of piecemeal efforts, but how can we address this problem among the other pressing problems?” Formica said.

COHHO created a transportation workgroup more than two months ago to begin bringing harmony to these “piecemeal efforts.”

The workgroup has focused on three areas to improve transportation for the homeless and poor: Opposing the increase in Metrorail and Metrobus fares, ensuring Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority’s transition to electronic payments with SmartTrip cards does not make public transportation less accessible for the poor and improving shelter transportation during hypothermia season.

In a letter to the transit agency, known as WMATA, Formica and COHHO asks the transit authority to increase Metrorail fares more than bus fares (the

opposite is true in WMATA’s approved increases), keep bus tokens in use and not charge more for riders who do not use SmartTrip cards.

“WMATA will have to make some tough decisions regarding where to place the burden of increased costs,” the letter reads. “COHHO asks that the increased funding not be obtained at the cost of making transportation unaffordable to the region’s most low income and vulnerable residents.”

WMATA did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

The COHHO transportation workgroup also wants to overhaul the shelter transportation system during hypothermia season. Currently, the United Planning Organization is contracted to have vans go back and forth to shelters during hypothermia season and take people to different locations to stay out of the cold. But problems often arise.

“Men end up being late, [the vans] can’t hold a lot of people, they have to stand in line for an hour or two sometimes,” Formica said.

Defeat Poverty DC, an organization advocating for the basic needs of people in the city, is planning a campaign in the future for affordable and accessible transportation for low-income residents. Joe Weedon, executive director of the organization, added another pertinent issue to the list created by COHHO — transportation out of the city. Weedon wants to explore the options and reliability of transportation to get people into the suburbs.

“Our transportation funnels people downtown, but as our economy changed, not all the jobs are downtown,” he said.

In the end, what COHHO and Defeat Poverty DC are advocating is simple: “What it comes down to,” Formica said,



# Stretching Past Homelessness with Yoga

By Christina Mele  
Editorial Intern

Every Tuesday from 3p.m. to 4 p.m., guests of Miriam's Kitchen are encouraged to come to the dining room and participate in Miriam's Studio yoga session.

For one hour a week, men and women can come here to take a break from their daily lives, loosen their muscles and relax their minds.

"They're among the best students I've ever seen," yoga instructor Julie Eisenberg said. "They don't come in with a lot of ego. They do what they can do. They're not shy about saying they're not comfortable doing something. They do their best to do the best they can."

The yoga program, which has been going on for three years, usually has two to six participants per week, according to Eisenberg.

"There's a couple people who come every week, then others who just want to give it a try," Eisenberg said. "There are two or three people who come once or twice a month, and two gentlemen who come every single week."

The group ranges in age from young children whose parents bring them along to class, to one 73-year-old man. Most of the participants are in their 30s and 40s, but the group also does a bit of meditation, which the older participants like, Eisenberg said. The group is very accommodating to anyone interested in participating, including people with physical disabilities or in wheelchairs.

"If you can't sit on the floor, you can sit in a chair and do the poses," Eisenberg said. "Anyone can participate."

Eisenberg said the biggest challenge for participants is focusing, given the amount of activity going on in the dining room during the sessions. She creates what she calls the "yoga bubble," in which the students focus only on the movements they are doing and tune out everything else around them.

"We do a lot of balancing poses to help, because you have to focus to balance," she said. "We try to make sure it's not too difficult, but we do want people to be a little challenged and pushed beyond their comfort zone."

Eisenberg said each session begins



**Yoga participants practice their balance and coordination at Miriam's Kitchen. Yoga is offered every Tuesday in the dining room from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

PHOTO BY GRACY OBUCHOWICZ

with a check-in. She asks the students how their week was, and asks new participants to introduce themselves. She also addresses any injuries that she needs to be mindful of.

Next the students tune in with deep breathing and stretching, and begin to loosen up. They do standing postures, balancing poses and begin coordinating their breathing with movement. Eisenberg said that, depending on the class, they might go into deeper, more challenging yoga poses.

The session ends with five minutes of relaxation lying on their backs, "kind of like taking a nap."

Eisenberg said the class is mixed-level, with the students doing as much as they can do.

"It's usually a pretty gentle class, but sometimes a group in good shape will want to detoxify," she said. "There are some people who are very experienced and some who are brand new. We try to mold the class around the students."

Students are encouraged to practice balance and long, deep breathing between classes.

"One of the biggest things is yoga allows them to quiet the minds," she said. "When you don't have a consistent, safe place to live, your mind is buzzing. One of the great benefits is you get to focus on calming down."

Another benefit, Eisenberg said, is

being able to loosen the body. Some students who could barely bend over when they started coming to class can now bend down and touch their toes, she said. Their skills have gotten better, and "better posture makes you feel better."

Eisenberg, who used to work a day job downtown while teaching yoga on the side, first came to Miriam's Kitchen when she was laid off from her job. She decided to come in and teach yoga after being asked by a friend who was also working there.

"It was an important transition from losing my job to taking the next steps in life," she said. "Now [the program] has been continuous for three years without missing a class, even on holidays."

Eisenberg encourages everyone to come in and try out the class, regardless of skill level.

"To me this is what yoga really is," she said. "Re-

ally, yoga is about making the practice of relaxation available to everybody—not just people who can afford it. This is the true definition of yoga, working with people from all walks of life."

One participant, Tiant Royal, has been going to Miriam's Kitchen for yoga every week for two of the three years. He happened to find out about the program one day while he was at Miriam's Kitchen.

"I wanted to do a little exercise," he said. "It relaxes me. It's good for stretching and keeping in good health."

Now Royal is one of the most experienced students in the class.

"It's something to look forward to," he said. "I get to know people and talk to them. It keeps me going the rest of the week and keeps me motivated."

Royal said he has made a lot of progress since starting out, and he can now bend all the way down to the floor. He thinks that anyone who is considering giving the program a shot should do so.

"A lot of people don't stick it out," he said. "I want them to try it out. They can probably do it if they hang on and keep trying."

Eisenberg echoes this sentiment.

"Yoga is something that benefits not just the people practicing but the people around them, spreading that energy," she said. "It's about building personal power. It's an empowering practice."



**A participant of Miriam's Kitchen's yoga program reaches down - stretching is an essential part of the program.**

PHOTO BY GRACY OBUCHOWICZ



## Raising Awareness and Funds for Carpenter's Shelter



**By Laura Lindskov Jensen**  
*Volunteer*

On April 28, Eisenhower Avenue in Alexandria, Va., was packed with hundreds of local runners who had laced up their shoes for a good cause.

They were there for The Run for Shelter, an event held to raise aware-

ness about homelessness in the affluent Virginia suburb and benefit a local shelter that has served the community since 1988.

Carpenter's Shelter, the largest shelter in Northern Virginia, helps more than 1,000 men, women and children every year, offering not only beds but guidance, education and life-skills training that help

people overcome homelessness.

"Over 90 percent of the people [that comes to Carpenter's Shelter], once they complete the program, they never go back to being homeless," said Kelly Andreae, the organization's director of development.

"They can always come back and get help if something goes wrong, so they don't end up back on the street or in a shelter."

Funds from the Race for Shelter will help sustain the shelter's work, Andreae said. A total of 525 runners participated in the race, and through registration fees and donations, it raised exactly \$38,385.49.

Andreae was thrilled.

"I think it went awesome," she said.

Even as the last runner passed the finish line, she was looking ahead to next year's race.

"We love the support from the community," Andreae said. "People have such big hearts."

## Why did you show up for Run for Shelter?



**Susan Akers**  
*Lawyer, runner and Alexandria citizen.*

I love to run races, but when I saw this one I decided to volunteer instead of running it. We live in the area and I want to support the efforts on helping the homeless and also it was a good opportunity for me and my son to volunteer.



**Crohur Mccarthy**  
*An enthusiastic runner visiting from Ireland and soon moving to the States.*

I've always run. I have a friend that works for Carpenter's Shelter and I would be going for a run anyway and it is a good cause, and also my friend is putting a lot of efforts into his work at Carpenter's Shelter, so I wanted to run it.



**Maggie O'Brien**  
*A local citizen who won second place for women.*

We live in the area and we thought it was a good cause, so we wanted to come out this Saturday and support it. It was awesome to be able to combine doing something you believe in and something you enjoy doing.

## With Back on My Feet attending, the race had several winners

**By Laura Lindskov Jensen**  
*Volunteer*

For Run for Shelter participant Tyrone Duncan, the problem of homelessness was a very personal one.

He came with friends from the District-based group Back on My Feet, which helps homeless people rebuild their lives through running.

Duncan ran the 10-kilometer race in 46 minutes, not the fastest time. But, he says when he started with Back on My Feet, he could not have run 30 feet.

"I was a drug addict and an alcoholic," he said.

That was two years ago. Today, Duncan is a different man. He said he is sober and has run two marathons and two half marathons. He is now working at Target Food and he has an apartment.

"I can thank Back on My Feet for helping me realize that you can make that big turnaround," said Duncan.

He gave Back on My Feet this credit saying the discipline he developed through meeting up for regular 5:30 a.m. runs three times a week helped

him get read for a job.

"It gets you up in the morning and it's physically and mentally supporting to run," Tyrone said. Back on My Feet Program Director Amy Vokes said that the program helps build self-esteem and confidence, as well as friendships. Runners think "If I can run 10K, I can definitely get that job," she said.

"The physical exercise helps, but [Back on My Feet is] also looking at group work and how to be a part of a community," Vokes said.

Donald Bass, 46, a new member of Back on My Feet, participated in the 1-kilometer fun run. Like Duncan, Bass has been working to leave behind his addictions through running.

"The old me have had a lot of tragedy and was making bad choices of life," Bass said. Running "means a lot because my theme for myself is

mind, body and soul. Those are all things I'm working on for the new me."

Back on My Feet attends about one race a month, but this one meant something special to the group.

"This is a great opportunity to work alongside other homeless service providers, you don't often get that opportunity in a race setting," Vokes said. "We are proud of being here and proud of them supporting us."



**Back on My Feet's Tyrone Duncan in grey and yellow shirt with some other members just after he finished the race.**



# BARNEY & CLYDE

BARNEY & CLYDE IS A COMIC STRIP ABOUT AN UNLIKELY FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN A HOMELESS MAN AND A TYCOON. IT'S ABOUT OUR MODERN, POLARIZED ECONOMY OF HAVES AND HAVE-NOTS. IT RE-EXAMINES TRADITIONAL MEASURES OF SUCCESS, FAILURE, AND THE NATURE OF HAPPINESS.

## BARNEY

by Weingartens & Clark

Look! A porcupine.

They're strange animals. They have huge appetites...

So they get fat. Which means that...

When they go to the thin ends of the branches to find the tastiest buds...

They fall off. And get pierced by their own quills.

But their immune systems keep them from infection.

What a stupid species!

Protected by nature and...

Pure dumb luck!

ABOUT THE AUTHORS: GENE WEINGARTEN IS A COLLEGE DROPOUT AND THE NATIONALLY SYNDICATED HUMOR COLUMNIST FOR THE WASHINGTON POST. DAN WEINGARTEN IS A FORMER COLLEGE DROPOUT AND A CURRENT COLLEGE STUDENT MAJORING IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY. MANY THANKS TO GENE WEINGARTEN AND THE WASHINGTON POST WRITER'S GROUP FOR ALLOWING STREET SENSE TO RUN BARNEY & CLYDE.

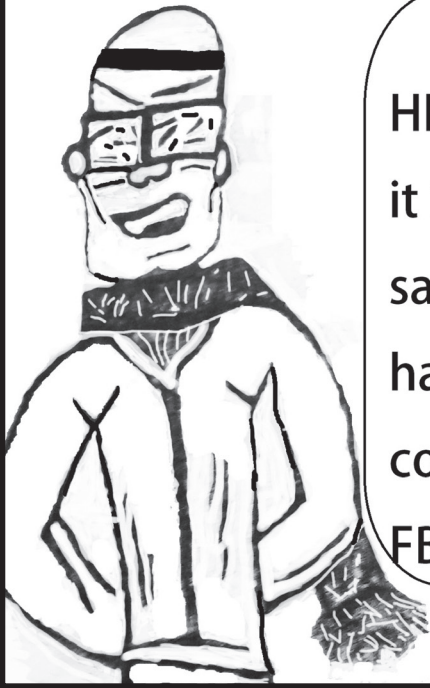
## GLARPH THE POSTULATIN' SHARK #2: GLARPH ROOTS FOR THE HOME TEAM

By Chris Shaw  
"The Cowboy Poet"



## KLEVER'S comic's

By Chino Dean Vendor **KLEVER'S COMICS #11: AGENT MYERS**



HELLO! How funny, it is Agent Myers, says they don't handle stolen copyrights! In the FBI!



# LOSER!

By Jeffery McNeil  
Vendor

Speaker of the House John Boehner's recent remarks about Mitt Romney not being a loser because he made a lot of money are deeply revolting, insinuating that those who do not have privileges like Gov. Romney are losers.

This highlights what Republicans think about people who struggle: Losers!

I wonder why Republicans scorn everyone who cannot build an elevator in their garage. This should be a message toward those not sold on re-electing President Obama. Independents, this is what Republicans think of you, loser! The wealthy do not care whether you lose the home they sold you. They just want you to vote for them, so they can pick your pockets just like in 2007.

The myth that financial wealth makes you a winner is oxymoronic. Truth is, the more wealth you accumulate, the more at risk you are of becoming a jerk.

The reason why people do not like Romney is not that he is successful or rich. People dislike Romney because he lets everyone know he is rich. He acts like Thurston Howell III instead of another wealthy man, our current president. Furthermore, no one believes he started from nowhere to amass his fortune. Everyone knows he got his wealth from his father.

I do not envy Romney or the Republicans who hold their nose feigning endorsement. I feel as much pity for him as I do a panhandler asking for change.

## Vendors, Listen Up!!!

By Phillip Black  
Vendor, "The Cat in the Hat"

I've been selling *Street Sense* papers for about four years now. It's very demanding. Long days ... too cold in the winter ... too hot in the summer. It also can be very competitive among vendors. We are all independent, working for ourselves. But we have a common goal.

*Street Sense* gives us an opportunity to better our lives and gives us a way to earn and save money. As vendors, we should always look out for each other.

People sleeping outside because they have core convictions rather than selling their souls for the trappings of power get my respect. I do not know whether a rich man can go to heaven, but many of them can go to hell.

The 99 percent of us do not castigate wealth. What people detest is those with wealth trying to make the rest of us poor. What irks Americans is seeing rich people who have billions, like the Koch brothers, use their wealth to cut workers' pensions or use their influence to screw seniors out of their Social Security. What appalls voters is seeing those we elected, such as Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and Rep. Paul Ryan, prostitute themselves because a wealthy man tells them to.

Boehner shows why Republicans are the party of the out of touch. Buying and selling companies and taking money offshore because you do not want to pay taxes are not admirable traits, they are cowardly. Buying companies and stripping them of their assets, then firing all their employees without having the guts to do it personally is yellow.

Equating success with wealth is an illusion. There are some who used their wealth to make America a better place like Steve Jobs and the Kennedys, but they seem to be outnumbered by bastards like the Koch brothers and Grover Norquist.

I hope when Obama gets re-elected, he redistributes wealth by raising Romney's and his oligarch buddies' taxes.

Now, I know it's not easy, but looking out for one another gives us all a better chance to succeed. I promise myself that I will always look out for vendors who just started selling *Street Sense* papers.

*Street Sense* will always make sure that each and every vendor will be successful as long as we follow the code of conduct. If any vendor has a problem with another vendor, our vendor manager, Allen, will take care of it.

## A Legal Hustle, Finally

By Clifton Davis  
Vendor

"*Street sense*, meet *Street Sense*."  
"My pleasure. I look forward to working together."

Since these two connected, my life has changed dramatically. I'm back on my feet. I'm off the street. I have bread in my pocket.

For a long time, I had a problem with biting my tongue or turning the other cheek. I quickly realized that attitude would make it rather difficult to sell the newspaper. So, I decided that I would rather throw my pride out the window than go back to a place I didn't want to be.

I did this because you get a lot of rejections when you're trying to sell something that someone doesn't want. So, being a *Street Sense* vendor has given me a chance to work on my anger management. Now I don't get as furious

as I used to when a prospective customer says, "NO!"

Selling and writing for the paper has also helped me regularly have bread in my pocket. YEAH!

As a professional hustler, I wasn't familiar with that situation. But being there has enabled me to rent a couple rooms throughout the year, which prevents me from revisiting the dark sides of my past. I have also found a wonderful companion along this road to success. It seems that she is the love of my life. I enjoy her company all the time.

Finally, I saw a great opportunity to become involved in a newspaper that makes a positive difference for its community. I never thought that I would be able to legally buy papers for 35 cents and sell them for at least a dollar. But, I can! It's amazing.

So, thank you, *Street Sense* and *Street Sense* for creating my first (but maybe not last) legal hustle.

WASHINGTON, DC

OD  911

HELP PREVENT OVERDOSE DEATHS IN DC

## HAVE YOU EVER BEEN AFRAID TO CALL 911?

100 people die needlessly every year in DC from accidental drug overdoses. Friends and family are often afraid to call 911 for life-saving assistance because they fear police involvement.

We are working to save lives by passing DC Council Bill B19-0754, the Good Samaritan Overdose Prevention Amendment Act of 2012. This law would protect people from arrest for drug-related offenses when seeking medical assistance for someone who has overdosed.

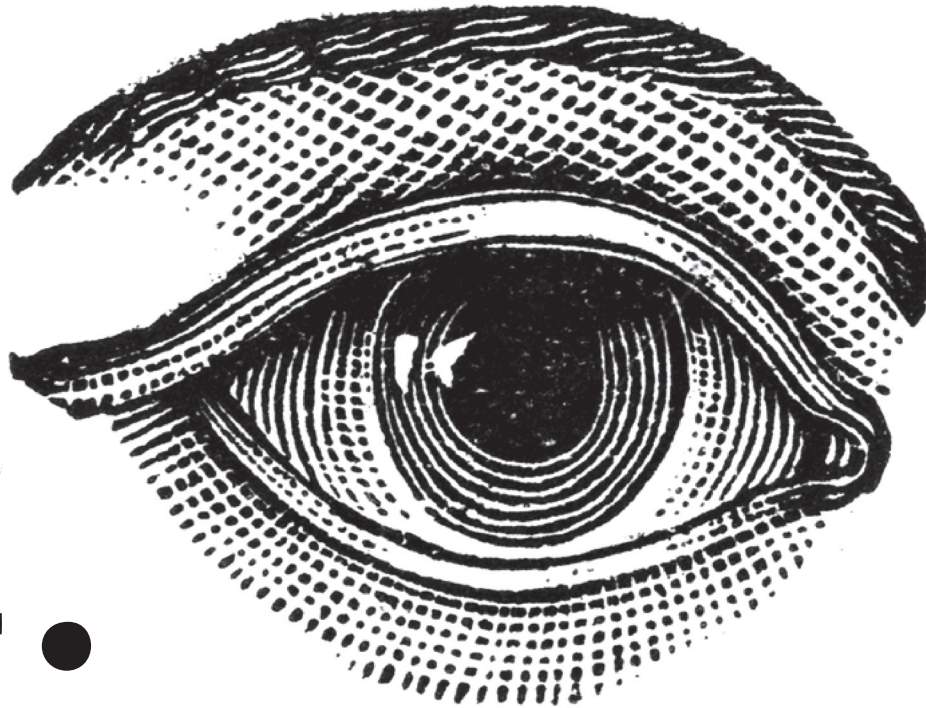
Please share your overdose story with us to help build support for this urgently needed law that will help save lives in our community.

Call 320-634-6324 to leave a voicemail  
or email [StopODinDC@gmail.com](mailto:StopODinDC@gmail.com)



Supported by the Public Service Grant Commission, a program of  
The George Washington University's Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service.

**PART  
TWO**



# Nina the Detective & the Revealing Photos

By Ivory Wilson  
Vendor

*The story so far: Nina does not yet know that a gangster she arrested, Fitz O'Patrick, has successfully blackmailed Mayor Richard. O'Patrick's people told the mayor they have photos of him in a hotel with an underage girl. The mayor told the DA to drop all charges against O'Patrick.*

Nina is happy. She is dancing around her basement room singing Shagg Nasty's tune, Going Get Your Freak On. She has stopped one of Chicago's biggest gangsters, putting him and his crew behind bars where they belong.

Nina runs upstairs to the kitchen where her grandparents, Steve and Ann, are having a leisurely breakfast. "Guess who just called," she tells her grandparents.

***Newton wouldn't  
be calling her on  
her day off unless  
there was trouble.***

"Why don't you tell us instead of playing guessing games?" her grandfather says.

"It was Pir Brown!" Nina exclaims.

"Where is that girl, Nina, and why won't she come for dinner?" her grandmother asks.

"Sorry, Grandma," Nina explains. "She's still in Detroit but called to congratulate me on my big case."

Her grandfather smiles broadly at Nina and tells her how happy they are for their crime-fighting granddaughter. "How about sitting down and eating your

breakfast before it gets cold?" he says.

"And don't forget your fruit, Nina dear," her grandmother adds.

Nina sits down and devours her breakfast in the company of her grandparents. After breakfast, Nina goes upstairs, showers and gets dressed for her day off. Coming back downstairs she announces, "I'll be home late."

"Just be home in time for dinner, Nina dear," says her grandfather.

"Yes, sir," Nina says as she walks outside and closes the door behind her. She gets into her 429 Hemi Ford Mustang, revs the engine and thinks again what a great day this is going to be.

Captain Newton, Nina's commanding officer, knows that it's Nina's day off. However, he's worried that the news about Fitz O'Patrick will reach her from one of the detectives. Meanwhile, Nina is driving the Mustang to the mall, watching the traffic and remembering what it was like being a traffic cop. Her thoughts are interrupted by the ringing of her cellphone.

"Nina here," she answers, only to be greeted by "Hey, Nina. Good morning."

That's all it takes for Nina to know something is wrong. Newton wouldn't be calling her on her day off unless there was trouble. Newton fills the silence by asking Nina where she is.

"Heading to the mall. What's up, Captain?"

There is another pause and Newton asks if Nina can stop by the Department. "Sure thing, Captain," she says.

"Be there in about twenty minutes."

About 20 minutes later, Nina drives up to the Department, parks her car and walks in without a care in the world, smiling as she approaches the Captain's office.

***"Look, Nina, we've  
only got a few good  
detectives in this  
department — and  
you're one of them."***

Captain Newton is sitting behind his desk when Nina knocks.

"Come on in, Nina, and close the door behind you. Take a seat, Detective."

Nina sits down and asks, "What's up, Captain?"

"Bad news," he says. "Fitz O'Patrick won't be going to jail for anything."

Nina jumps from the chair, heading to the Captain's desk, yelling, "You can't be serious, Captain!"

Newton looks at Nina and tells her to sit back down.

"If you get out of that chair again, I'll see that you're suspended for 60 days."

Nina calms herself down a little and says quietly, "Yes, sir."

The Captain explains, "This wasn't my decision. Dammit, Nina, you know this wasn't my call. It came from higher up and we had no choice. The DA takes his orders from the Mayor and the Mayor is in bed with the gang. Our hands are tied."

"Look, Nina, we've only got a few good detectives in this department," the Captain continued, "and you're one of them. We've got daily murders and I need you. Heck, the city needs you, Nina. But if we're going to take Fitz O'Patrick and his gang down once and for all, we're going to need a new Mayor, and then we can make a difference. So the question is, Nina, are you interested in running? Can I convince you to run for Mayor?"

Nina sat with her mouth open thinking about her future and the implications of what the Captain just told her.

***To be continued...***



BELOW: A fish found near the shore in at Louisiana's Grand Isle State Park in May 2010, less than one month after the Gulf Oil Spill began. PHOTO BY FLICKR USER JEFF WARREN

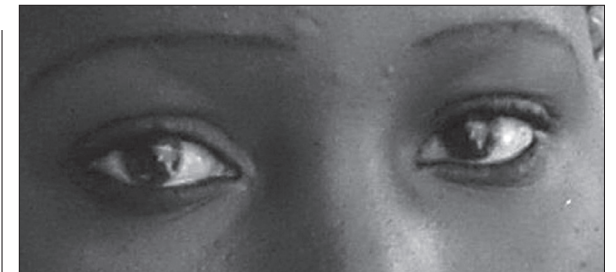
# Blackened Shrimp

By Chris Shaw  
"The Cowboy Poet"

2 years after the Deepwater Gulf Oil Spill, the first criminal charges have been prosecuted against a former BP engineer for destruction of evidence, many fish sport open sources and visible black streaks across their bodies, and billion dollar lawsuits begin to resolve...

They're called "Plumes,"  
Bubbling up from beneath, like a spewing Red Death  
'Neath the surface of the Gulf waters.  
Although it's thick crude it's not Black,  
But blood red. And,  
I am in no mood  
For games and fun, so  
What is on the run, or Who?  
Surely not th'executives of Great Oil, no noddie  
Yet all that in Nature a corporate Body

Can possibly despoil--  
In the swiftest of speeds.  
the Manatee, Pelican, Cormorant, Tile fish in their  
needs,  
red Snapper, Croaker, Mackerel and Jack--  
One they are gone, will they ever come back?  
Sea gull, Tern, Sandpiper too,  
Once the oysters and mudbugs get shot  
Full poison, they might as well be THROUGH.  
Forget the platters heaped with taste and flavour  
At Commander's and Galatoire.  
Acme Seafood stands empty, since th' entire Gulf  
Has become a petroleum  
"Abbattoir."  
That the French for slaughterhouse, Brother.  
sister, hear our cry!  
Not till these wells run dry  
can our Beloved Gulf run clean and free,  
So, when shall that blessed day  
Be?



## The Avoidant Look in Your Eyes

Kayla Bramnick  
Volunteer

Painting my face might just become one of my favorite pastimes. Who doesn't enjoy the liberty colors allow an artist, transforming a blank and plain canvas into beauty, abstraction, and oh so much meaning. One can take a brush and a palette and create an illusion using any part of a human face. Well every part except for one, in my opinion that one body part is the eye.

The eye is a window into the soul of an individual. Growing up my parents used to say, "I know when you are lying by the avoidant look in your eyes." Truth and emotion are all placed on display in those mystical balls.

The makeup artistry has advanced to such levels of genius so as to distract a random onlooker from gazing into the soul of the model. However, even the greatest of poker faces cannot truly deceive unless the performer masters the eyes' multi-faceted language and all of its manipulations.

In my short lifespan there have been few sets of eyes to have captured my heart's core.

The first pair of eyes to ever demand my curiosity, - majestic reverence manifested in light of the mystic surrounding those eyes - displayed a struggle, a vicious tug of war between intense pain and harsh indifference. An interested analyst could sense the volumes of instances when desperate cries had been ignored and instead a cold lesson in apathy was taught. The tiny, naked, black and blue, teary-eyed little girl would learn the proper way to paint her face.

Art had concealed her fear for years. In her talent she was proud. No one would ever look past the mask; no one would ever penetrate her heart. How was she to know that one day a group of people would come to her? A group made up of colors vastly different than her own. A group of individuals, who understood this artistry, yet had the magical powers to see past its lies. How was she to know, that random somebody from a foreign land would have the ability to look into her soul and offer her the one thing she never allowed herself to want, Love.

Another pair of eyes radiating sadness, fear, and anger finally commencing a journey of healing. These are the eyes that haunt me. For these eyes, I give the life in mine.

## Soup, Sandwiches and Coffee

By James Davis  
Vendor

An excerpt from my upcoming poetry book "Aru-gula Salad and Other Food for Thought".

The sign said Soup, Sandwiches and Coffee  
as the long line started to form.

It didn't matter if unsettled weather  
was imminent from an approaching storm.

Men of all ages and sizes trying to get their fill,  
only one question left, who will fit the bill?

I'll have a latte, said one - another, tuna on rye,  
I'll just have butternut squash soup, hold the fly!

Hooking across the street at the park,  
another line starts to form.

There is no sign and  
the customers aren't the norm.

The men and women clamor for coffee,  
sanwiches and soup.

An old woman sips slowly,  
sitting on a stoop.

Some eat pretty fast,  
soggy sandwiches in the rain.

But we're all happy and dry,  
inside the old Au bon Pain.



## Change

By Kim  
Volunteer

The change I want in my life today  
The change of my past wiped away  
The change I see me on the right track  
The change that makes me not want to look back  
The change that makes me have a brighter day  
The change that sending me the right way  
The change that makes you want to do right  
The change that makes you pray every day and night.

Jesse

By Mary Otto  
Editor-in-Chief

Friends and colleagues in the district’s homeless community are remembering poet and activist Jesse Smith Jr., who died May 1. He had been ill for about a year.

A popular and articulate speaker for the National Coalition for the Homeless’ Faces of Homelessness Speakers Bureau, and for the Youth Service Opportunities Project, Smith captivated audiences with the story of his own journey, from security, to homelessness to a new place of insight into human vulnerability.

Smith grew up in Washington and worked in the telecommunications industry. But he struggled with chronic depression and drug addiction. When he ended up in Franklin Shelter in Northwest Washington in 2005 he described the place as “extremely frightening, almost unbearable.” But he eventually formed bonds with the other homeless men as well as their advocates, including the late Mary Ann

Luby, a Catholic sister and homeless outreach worker.

“He was one of Mary Ann’s boys,” recalled Michael Stoops, of the National Coalition for the Homeless. Working with Luby, Smith helped organize a successful effort to fight the closing of the shelter in 2006. And he found a new calling as an advocate for other homeless people.

In 2007, Smith, serving a stint as an Americorps VISTA member, worked as the first vendor manager at *Street Sense*.

“He was a really sweet, caring guy,” said *Street Sense* cofounder Laura Thompson Osuri. “Everybody loved Jesse.”

Brenda Karyl Lee-Wilson, who sold the newspaper from its early days, recalled Smith’s compassion..

“No matter his personal problems, he put those aside always for the benefit of his fellow man.”

*Street Sense* vendor James Davis said the news of Smith’s death had hit him hard.

“He never had a bad word to say about anybody. He always looked for the good.”

Smith went on to work as a counselor at the National Caucus for Black Aging, helping place poor, elderly and

minority people into jobs. Until he was hospitalized last year, Smith remained involved with *Street Sense*, volunteering in the office and writing poems and essays for the paper.

At the time *Street Sense* went to press, Smith’s death notice was not yet available. A spokeswoman for the city medical examiner said his cause of death had not yet been determined.

One of Smith’s last contributions to

*Street Sense* was a poem about the fragile friendship between a busy working man and an unfailingly cheerful homeless woman.

*“I awoke this morning  
Thinking it’s a bit chilly outside; let  
me get a coat from the closet.  
On my way to work I wondered how the  
lady was doing, and if she had a coat.  
I will awaken tomorrow morning  
God willing, thinking of her.”*

With a heavy heart, *Street Sense* regrets to acknowledge the passing of Jesse Smith.

Services honoring our friend and colleague will be held:

**Saturday, May 12th**  
Rhines Funeral Home  
3005 12th Street  
N.E.Washington D.C.  
20017

Viewing 9:00 am - 11:00 am  
Funeral 11:00 am - 12:00pm



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Sudoku  
Courtesy of Krazydad.com

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see page 3



## Service Spotlight: D.C. Diaper Bank

By Abbey Woodfin  
Editorial Intern

Despite the help from Corinne Cannon's family members, she and her husband were still struggling to make ends meet after the birth of their son.

"We were fortunate to have both of our families help support us, but we kept thinking about families that did not have family to help them," she said. "That's when we knew we needed to help other families by doing something sufficient."

After conducting some research, the Cannons were surprised that while some other cities had nonprofit diaper banks that collected and distributed diapers to needy families, the District did not. So the couple decided to start the DC Diaper Bank, launching the organization in their home in April 2010, on their son's first birthday.

The project grew so fast, they soon joined forces with the Capital Area Food Bank, which provided storage space for the donated diapers. As

they continued to garner donations, the Cannons sought help from additional agencies, groups, organizations and individuals to manage the project. Corinne Cannon uses donated funds to diapers at a discount. At wholesale prices, they cost 10 cents each, while retail they sell from 20-50 cents a piece.

The diapers are distributed to needy families through agency providers.

Some host diaper drives by standing outside of grocery stores asking people to purchase a package of diapers while they are shopping. Others buy diapers and then donate.

Although the diaper bank is just off its feet, the number of organizations and agencies it donates to is rapidly growing.

What started as a hobby quickly became a full-time job for Cannon, and it's one she is happy to have.

### DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH ACCESS HOTLINE

1-888-7WE HELP (1-888-793-4357)

### SHELTER

Calvary Women's Services  
110 Maryland Avenue, NE  
(202) 289-0596 (office)  
(202) 289-2111 (shelter)  
[www.calvaryservices.org](http://www.calvaryservices.org)

Central Union Mission (Men)  
1350 R Street, NW  
(202) 745-7118, [www.missiondc.org](http://www.missiondc.org)

Open Door Shelter (Women)  
425 2nd Street, NW  
(202) 393-1909  
[www.newhopeministriesdc.org/id3.html](http://www.newhopeministriesdc.org/id3.html)

Community of Hope (Family)  
1413 Girard Street, NW  
(202) 232-7356, [www.communityofhopedc.org](http://www.communityofhopedc.org)

Covenant House Washington (Youth)  
2001 Mississippi Avenue, SE  
(202) 610-9600, [www.covenanthousedc.org](http://www.covenanthousedc.org)

John Young Center (Women)  
119 D Street, NW  
(202) 639-8469, [www.catholiccharitiesdc.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org)

My Sister's Place  
PO Box 29596, Washington, DC 20017  
(202) 529-5261 (office)  
(202) 529-5991 (24-hour hotline)

N Street Village (Women)  
1333 N Street, NW  
(202) 939-2060, [www.nstreetvillage.org](http://www.nstreetvillage.org)

Samaritan Inns  
2523 14th St., NW  
(202) 667 - 8831  
<http://www.samaritaninns.org/home/>

New York Ave Shelter (Men 18+)  
1355-57 New York Avenue, NE  
(202) 832-2359

### FOOD

Charlie's Place  
1830 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
(202) 232-3066  
[www.stmargaretsdc.org/charliesplac](http://www.stmargaretsdc.org/charliesplac)

Church of the Pilgrims (Sundays only)  
2201 P Street, NW  
(202) 387-6612, [www.churchofthepilgrims.org](http://www.churchofthepilgrims.org)

Thrive DC  
Breakfast served Mon.-Fri., 9:30-11 a.m.  
Dinner for women and children, Mon.-Fri., 3-6 p.m.

St. Stephens Parish Church  
1525 Newton St., NW  
(202) 737-9311, [www.thrivedc.org](http://www.thrivedc.org)

Food and Friends  
219 Riggs Road, NE  
(202) 269-2277, [www.foodandfriends.org](http://www.foodandfriends.org)

Miriam's Kitchen  
2401 Virginia Avenue, NW  
(202) 452-8089, [www.miriamskitchen.org](http://www.miriamskitchen.org)

The Welcome Table  
Church of the Epiphany  
1317 G Street, NW  
(202) 347-2635, <http://www.epiphanydc.org/ministry/welcometbl.htm>

### MEDICAL RESOURCES

Christ House  
1717 Columbia Road, NW  
(202) 328-1100, [www.christhouse.org](http://www.christhouse.org)

Unity Health Care, Inc.  
3020 14th Street, NW  
(202) 745-4300, [www.unityhealthcare.org](http://www.unityhealthcare.org)

Whitman-Walker Clinic  
1407 S Street, NW  
(202) 797-3500, [www.wwc.org](http://www.wwc.org)

### OUTREACH CENTERS

Bread for the City  
1525 Seventh Street, NW  
(202) 265-2400  
1640 Good Hope Road, SE  
(202) 561-8587, [www.breadforthecity.org](http://www.breadforthecity.org)

Community Council for the Homeless at  
Friendship Place  
4713 Wisconsin Avenue NW  
(202) 364-1419, [www.cchfp.org](http://www.cchfp.org)

Bethany Women's Center  
1333 N Street, NW  
(202) 939-2060, [www.nstreetvillage.org](http://www.nstreetvillage.org)

Father McKenna Center  
19 Eye Street, NW  
(202) 842-1112

Friendship House  
619 D Street, SE  
(202) 675-9050, [www.friendshiphouse.net](http://www.friendshiphouse.net)

Georgetown Ministry Center  
1041 Wisconsin Avenue, NW  
(202) 338-8301  
[www.georgetownministrycenter.org](http://www.georgetownministrycenter.org)

Martha's Table  
2114 14th Street, NW  
(202) 328-6608, [www.marthastable.org](http://www.marthastable.org)

Rachel's Women's Center  
1222 11th Street, NW  
(202) 682-1005, [www.ccdsd.org/howorwc.php](http://www.ccdsd.org/howorwc.php)

Sasha Bruce Youthwork  
741 8th Street, SE  
(202) 675-9340, [www.sashabruce.org](http://www.sashabruce.org)

So Others Might Eat (SOME)  
71 "O" Street, NW  
(202) 797-8806; [www.some.org](http://www.some.org)

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Academy of Hope GED Center  
601 Edgewood Street, NE  
(202) 269-6623, [www.aohdc.org](http://www.aohdc.org)

Catholic Community Services  
924 G Street, NW  
(202) 772-4300, [www.ccs-dc.org](http://www.ccs-dc.org)

D.C. Coalition for the Homeless  
1234 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
(202) 347-8870, [www.dccfh.org](http://www.dccfh.org)

Community Family Life Services  
305 E Street, NW  
(202) 347-0511, [www.cflsdc.org](http://www.cflsdc.org)

Foundry Methodist Church  
1500 16th Street, NW  
(202) 332-4010, [www.foundryumc.org](http://www.foundryumc.org)

Gospel Rescue Ministries (Men)  
810 5th Street, NW  
(202) 842-1731, [www.grm.org](http://www.grm.org)

Hermano Pedro Day Center  
3211 Sacred Heart Way, NW  
(202) 332-2874  
[www.ccs-dc.org/find/services/](http://www.ccs-dc.org/find/services/)

JHP, Inc.  
425 2nd Street, NW  
(202) 544-9126, [www.jobshavepriority.org](http://www.jobshavepriority.org)

Samaritan Ministry  
1345 U Street, SE  
1516 Hamilton Street, NW  
(202) 889-7702, [www.samaritanministry.org](http://www.samaritanministry.org)

**SHELTER HOTLINE:  
1-800-535-7252**

LAST WORD: Searching for Meaning in Tragedy

By Christina Mele  
Editorial Intern



As a college student, it never ceases to amaze me how much of my daily news I get from Facebook and other social media outlets. Most of this news is silly or humorous, and some of it is pure entertainment. Every so often — such as when Osama Bin Laden was killed — it is significant.

But the occasions when this Facebook-as-a-news-source phenomenon stand out to me the most have been when the news being spread is severely troubling.

Last week, I was sitting at my computer browsing Facebook like a typical college student when out of the blue — among the profile picture changes, relationship updates and newly uploaded albums — a particular status on my homepage stood out.

A friend from Houston posted a story about four teenagers from his high school who were arrested after being accused of killing a homeless man over a dollar.

As someone who works with homeless men and women on a weekly basis, I was offended. As a human being, I was appalled.

The four teenagers were charged with capital murder after allegedly robbing and shooting Pedro Miguel Rosales Ramos. The 32-year-old homeless man was shot once in the chest and died on the scene. According to KHOU News in

Houston, the suspects’ motive for killing and robbing Ramos was taking the single dollar he was carrying.

I have now been working as an intern at *Street Sense* for almost three months. In that time I have interacted and worked with countless vendors, making acquaintances and even friends. Their stories challenge the common stereotypes of homelessness.

I’ve met vendors who are veterans, single mothers, and previously employed workers who became victims of an unrelenting economy. I’ve met vendors who take their roles seriously, who treat this like a job and make a living off selling newspapers. I’ve met talented writers and storytellers who love what they do.

When I read about this heartless killing, I was disturbed and disgusted. That someone could do something so heinous, could pick on someone so vulnerable, leaves me with more than just a bitter taste in my mouth.

I was angry when I read that story. I was also embarrassed that a group of people about my age would be charged with doing something so cowardly, and embarrassed that it would be possible for people to display such a drastic lack of compassion.

After reading the story I found it slightly reassuring to see the countless reactions of anger and disgust from my peers. At the end of the day I can only hope that people my age heard this story and reacted the same way that I saw others react on Facebook.

Even if a few people’s perspectives were changed or their minds were opened by this story, then at least one positive can be drawn from an act of senseless idiocy.

Happy Mother’s Day!

...from our vendors:

By Sybil Taylor  
Vendor

*Mother’s Day is a special and cherishable day, for all mothers of the world.*

*Mom is love,  
Mom is wonderful,  
Mom is understanding,  
Mom is passionate,  
Mom is exciting,  
Mom is a beautiful rose,  
and a bouquet of flowers.  
A special lady,  
full of joy and love.  
A nice dinner,  
set up with a glass of wine.  
On this day, honor your mother with lots of love  
and happiness.  
Mom is very special to have.  
And those of us who don’t have a mom,  
she will always be in your heart forever and ever.  
She might be gone, but not forgotten.*



Happy Mother’s Day from Sybil L. Taylor

By Evelyn Namn  
Vendor

Mothers are special people who deserve hugs, smiles, kisses, gifts and love on one very special day — and that day is Mother’s Day.

Mother’s Day is the day when mothers receive appreciation and love for carrying their babies for their first months, and clothing, nourishing and raising them through childhood.

Children should be grateful and thankful for a parent who has had their back ever since they were a small baby, the one holding onto them all those years. The child was given the clothes they wore, shoes for their feet and food on the table through the struggles of their parents.

Your mom will love you because you are her child. God will always keep

your mom out there to help you. For all of that you should give your mom a big hug and kiss and a “thank you” because of all the times that you have been carried. Sometimes if your father may have done wrong by you or done things that you may not even imagine, seeing your mom always come through for you will be a great uplifting experience.

Every single person in the world must be happy because of the help of his or her mother.

As a mother myself, I say you should be happy with what and who you are and have in your life and accept it just as it is.

*May God bless you all, and HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY!*

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